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SUBJECT: PRT KIRKUK: NEWEST MEMBERS OF KIRKUK'S BAR
PARTICIPATE IN FIRST CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

¶1. This is a Kirkuk Provincial Reconstruction Team message.

¶2. (SBU) Summary: On January, 21 and 23, 2010, the Kirkuk Jurist Union (KJU) hosted a successful two-day workshop on practical skills for the legal practice in Iraq. The two-day event also included a tour of Kirkuk's primary detention center and a candid in-chamber discussion with Kirkuk Chief Judge Awni about professional responsibility. The two day event was part of the overall ROL strategy to enhance the legal profession, encourage professional legal organizations to develop continuing legal education programs, and expand the capacity for the KJU to develop a self-sustaining organization. End Summary.

KJU - Catalyst for Rule of Law in Kirkuk

¶3. (SBU) The Kirkuk Jurist Union (KJU) is a non-government organization designed to assist members in the development of the legal profession. Members pay approximately 3 USD annually for dues that barely cover the expense for printing their bar card. The KJU depends upon other NGOs for funding. The organization has received funding in the past from the PRT but those funds are no longer available. The KJU relies on PRT funds to publish three periodicals that educated lawyers, lay persons and the public at large on their legal rights under the new Iraqi government. These publications were distributed at all courthouses and other public venues in Kirkuk province. In addition, the KJU offers assistance in legal job placement, temporary financial aid, and sporadic workshops for attorneys and law students. Much of the organization's effectiveness is marginalized by its inability to become a self-sustaining organization supported by its members. The concept of organizational sustainment through dues and continuing education seminars is one of the many paradigm shifts the PRT Rule of Law Section's OPDAT Resident Legal Advisor seeks to encourage with KJU.

¶4. (SBU) The workshop kicked off with a tour of Police Headquarters' detention center. Detention center supervisor Colonel Korsheed introduced the newest members of the Iraqi bar to jailhouse procedures for visiting incarcerated clients. The group of twenty-one attorneys, including nine female attorneys, toured the male and female cell blocks as well as the attorney-client lounge. Korsheed stressed to the lawyers the importance of representing the accused and advancing the rule of law in Iraq.

Chief Judge Discusses Professional Responsibility to New Attorneys

¶5. (SBU) At Kirkuk's main courthouse, Chief Judge Awni opened his chamber to the attorneys for a candid discussion about the rule of law in Iraq and the important role lawyers play in the process. Awni stressed to the nascent members of the bar to embrace this enormous responsibility to society and

the rule of law. He explained lawyers should stand against improper behavior such as tortured confessions and protecting the right of the accused. The conversation also included some practical steps such as the professional decorum in the courtroom and proper communication with the court.

¶ 6. (SBU) The second day of the workshop introduced the new attorneys to the fundamentals of practicing law. The seminar's format was tailored toward the novice attorney's initial foray into the court and the criminal system. All of the presenters were experienced KJU officers in the respective subject-matter areas of attorney-client relationships, family law, civil and criminal law procedures.

Some of the specific legal procedures such as filing Q Some of the specific legal procedures such as filing emergency child support writs and the proper execution of a search warrant drew some critical debate among the attorneys.

At the conclusion of the workshop the attorneys received six hours of continuing legal education certificates and the instructors obtained teaching credit certificates for the commensurate amount.

Comment

¶ 7. (SBU) While under enormous fiscal constraints, PRT was able to facilitate the entire event without any major costs. The second day venue was FOB Warrior's dining facility (DFAC) VIP room. By having the lecture series at the DFAC, Iraqi attorneys had a chance to experience an American style buffet lunch. The KJU has not previously considered Continued Legal Education and similar seminars to develop their usefulness and credibility with the legal bar. However, the workshop,

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coupled with the student evaluations, should encourage the non-governmental organization to see the value of such programs for the legal profession and even to consider financial support from their members. The KJU has already begun discussing another CLE for the immediate future with the PRT's Rule of Law Section.

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